37. Mr. SHARP (Australia), supported by Germany, expressed concern at the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 7 of its report (A/49/7/Add.6), and asked what impact that recommendation would have on the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights in following up the Vienna Declaration, and on human rights activities in Cambodia.

38. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that since the Secretariat had been working solely on the basis of a commitment authority, it anticipated difficulty in recruiting the most qualified personnel. The Secretariat wished to offer longer-term contracts, but under present conditions there was a question as to whether it could do so without the express approval of the General Assembly. There was also a dire need for support staff for the High Commissioner for Human Rights; without increasing the level of the commitment authority or taking some other step, it would be impossible to hire such staff because potential recruits were unwilling to work on such a temporary basis. The Secretariat therefore awaited action by the General Assembly to put the funding for the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights on a more assured basis.

39. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had received the Secretary-General's report on 16 December, the same day it had approved its own draft report (A/49/796). The Advisory Committee had been working on the basis of an advance text. It was recommending an appropriation of $1,663,100, the amount which, it had been informed, had been committed and expended up to 31 December 1994, and which was therefore to be appropriated out of the $4,473,000. The Advisory Committee had requested information with regard to amounts that would be required up to 31 March 1995, and had been told that $591,200 would be needed. The Advisory Committee was taking no action, but simply saying that the activities covered in the report of the Secretary-General should continue using the balance of the commitment authority already authorized, which was $2,809,900. New posts were being requested in the Secretary-General's proposals, and the Advisory Committee had not had time to analyse the justification for them; that was why the Advisory Committee had made the procedural recommendation in question. It had made the same recommendation with respect to the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and with respect to the revised estimates under sections 3A, 3B, 3C, 4, 8, 15, 24 and 28 and income section 1, as indicated in document A/49/7/Add.4.

40. Mr. SHARP (Australia) said that, having heard the Controller's explanation, he felt even greater concern with regard to the likely consequences of accepting the Advisory Committee's recommendations. His delegation's concern about authorizing commitment authority rather than approving the necessary appropriation and assessment had become particularly acute since the Fifth Committee was engaged in studying the final appropriations for the biennium. He expressed his delegation's support for the Secretary-General's proposals, but if the Advisory Committee's recommendations were to be adopted, his delegation needed assurances that the detailed review mentioned by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee (A/49/7/Add.6, para. 5) would take place at the earliest opportunity.

41. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) assured the representative of Australia that the Advisory Committee would be considering the matter on a priority basis in February 1995.

42. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) expressed his delegation's serious concern at the continued failure to submit reports needed by the Fifth Committee to take action on appropriations for a number of key activities which were currently being carried out on the basis of a commitment authority. In the case of the Centre for Human Rights, the Secretariat had, in his delegation's view, satisfactorily responded to the concerns that had originally led the Committee to postpone a decision. The Secretary-General could not ask for commitment authority resources over and above those which had already been made available. His delegation therefore favoured the appropriation of the full amount. The extra posts requested in the Secretary-General's report could be authorized subject to review in the context of recommendations for the next programme budget.

43. Mr. HANSON (Canada), supported by Mr. SHARP (Australia), Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), Mr. MADDENS (Belgium), Mr. STAVRINOS (Cyprus), Mr. NIELSEN (Denmark), Ms. STULE (Finland), Mr. BOIN (France), Mr. STÖCKL (Germany), Mr. KYVETOS (Greece), Mr. KELLY (Ireland), Mr. MANCINI (Italy), Mr. TSUGAWA (Japan), Mr. MENKVELD (Netherlands), Ms. ALMAO (New Zealand), Mr. BRISEID (Norway), Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), Mr. MUÑOZ (Spain), Mr. HAMMARSKJÖLD (Sweden), and Ms. SHEAROUSE (United States), stressed the importance of human rights as a priority area for the reallocation of resources, and said that the Organization could afford no further delay in implementation of the consensus decisions of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, or in the work of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. They therefore supported the expeditious approval of the resources requested by the Secretary-General.

44. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation was sympathetic to the Secretary-General's proposals. In view of the fact that the Advisory Committee had recommended an appropriation of $1,663,000, however, with the balance being met from the commitment authority, he was concerned that there might not be sufficient resources in the contingency fund to cover all the requirements.

45. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico) noted that the report of the Advisory Committee contained some surprises. The Fifth Committee had been given so little time to consider the Advisory Committee's recommendations that she favoured a postponement of a decision on the matter.

46. Mr. ALOM (Bangladesh) said that there was much support for the Secretary-General's proposals, but it was in the interests of all for the points raised by the representative of India to be answered.

47. Mr. CHU Guangyou (China) noted that the Advisory Committee's report was the result of careful study and deserved equally careful consideration by the Fifth Committee. Since the report had only just been received, a hasty decision would be unwise. He wished that the right to development was treated with the same degree of enthusiasm as the issue of human rights. His delegation urged the Committee to adopt a cautious approach.

48. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) said that the request for an appropriation of $4.47 million had been before the Committee for more than a year. In the light of experience, however, the High Commissioner for Human Rights was asking for additional support within that amount. The High Commissioner was facing difficulties in recruiting staff on the basis of a commitment authority. The balance of the contingency fund stood at $16 million, although it would probably be reduced to $14.7 million if the Committee took action on the proposals before it.

Revised estimates under section 31, Office of Internal Oversight Services (A/49/7/Add.7; A/C.5/49/54)

49. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Fifth Committee should adopt the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly

(a) Approves an appropriation in an amount of $396,100 under section 31 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 subject to the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund;

(b) Approves an appropriation in an amount of $103,500 under section 28, Staff assessment, to be offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment."

50. The draft decision was adopted.

Revised estimates under section 4, Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (A/49/7/Add.5; A/C.5/49/51)

51. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Fifth Committee should adopt the following draft decision:

"The General Assembly

(a) Approves an appropriation of $2,242,100 under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 subject to the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund."

52. The draft decision was adopted.

53. Mr. AL-KIDWA (Observer for Palestine) stressed the importance of establishing a coordinating mechanism for United Nations activities in the occupied Palestinian territories. He was appreciative of the fact that the Secretary-General had established the Office of the Special Coordinator and had appointed Mr. Terje Roed Larsen to that post. He hoped that the appointment would prove of great benefit to the Palestinian people in the difficult period ahead.

54. In adopting the revised estimates under section 4 of the programme budget for 1994-1995, the Committee had performed an important task. He regretted, however, that document A/C.5/49/51 had appeared as late as 12 December 1994 and

that it devoted an excessive amount of space to political considerations, which was inappropriate in a technical report. The substantive issues need not be discussed, however, pending the Secretary-General's report on United Nations activities in the occupied territories, including those of the Special Coordinator in response to General Assembly resolution 48/213 and the resolution adopted that day on assistance to the Palestinian people. He stressed that the Special Coordinator's mandate was contained in those resolutions and nowhere else.

Revised estimates under sections 3A, 3B, 3C, 4, 8, 15, 24 and 28 and income section 1 (A/49/7/Add.4; A/C.5/49/44)

55. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the Secretary-General's report on the revised estimates for activities related to apartheid (A/C.5/49/44), said that under the programme budget for 1994-1995 $6 million had been allocated for such activities to the Department of Political Affairs and $3 million to the Department of Public Information. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/258 A, the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid was considered to have been successfully concluded and the Committee has therefore been disbanded. The Secretary-General had proposed the consequential amendments to the medium-term plan 1992-1998. The report attempted to convey the budgetary effects of winding down activities relating to the elimination of apartheid. Following in-depth consultations within the Secretariat, the Secretary-General was proposing that of the $5.7 million remaining after the expenditure of $3.4 million in 1994, $4.6 million should be used to strengthen activities in the African continent and the remaining $1 million surrendered to Member States.

56. In the Department of Political Affairs there were 24 posts for activities related to apartheid; it was proposed to redeploy 12 of those posts and abolish the 12 others. In the Department of Public Information it was proposed to abolish 13 of the 19 posts related to apartheid. Some resources would be deployed to strengthen African programmes, such as the New Agenda for the Development of Africa, the proposed convention on desertification and the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The servicing of Security Council sanctions committees by the Department of Political Affairs required the continuation of six posts that had previously been authorized on a temporary basis. More resources could also be made available for the special mission to Afghanistan. It was very fortunate that the resources released from the anti-apartheid programmes had come to hand at a time when new needs had arisen. He urged a speedy decision and expressed the hope that the General Assembly would provide clear guidelines.

57. Mr. PIKE (South Africa), supported by Mr. GOKHALE (India), said that the expertise that had been built up in relation to apartheid was extremely useful and wondered whether it could be retained within the relevant units of the Secretariat.

58. Mr. TARZI (Saudi Arabia), noting that the General Assembly had that day approved the special mission to Afghanistan, said that according to the report of the Advisory Committee decisions on the issue would not be finalized until February 1995. The mission was due to leave New York before Christmas, however, and he wondered whether the necessary resources would be made available in time.